

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR EFFICIENT DATA BROWSING

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Reference to Related Application

This application is a continuation of application no. 09/591,796, filed June 12, 2000,
now U.S. Patent NO. 6,675,212.

Background of the Invention,

11/28/04
AS

1. Field of the Invention

10 The present invention relates generally to data browsing systems and, more particularly, to systems and methods for improving data browsing efficiency in computer implemented data browsing systems.

2. Related Art

15 Data browsing is a common form of information review. While conducting research in one text, an individual may come across a reference to another text, article or other source of information, which appears pertinent to the task at hand. The individual then retrieves the referenced text to review, while saving his place in the original text. While reviewing the referenced text, the individual can then repeat the process or return to the original text. In the traditional world of physical books and libraries, this data browsing process is labor intensive
20 and time consuming.

With the development of computer networks and hyperlinked electronic data, data browsing has become simpler, faster and more effective. Hyperlinked data is data that includes additional information, which references a location of another data file or data object. By selecting a particular piece of hyperlinked data, such as by pointing to it with a
25 cursor and pressing a button, a user of a data browsing system, causes the referenced data file or data object to be retrieved and presented to the user. While the concept of hyperlinked data is applicable to many types of data retrieval systems, the most common application today is on the Internet and the World Wide Web.

30 The Internet is a computer network made up of nodes spanning the entire globe. A node can be a multi-purpose computer, a computer network, or any machine capable of communicating using Internet Protocol, such as routers, bridges and dumb terminals. Host computers or networks of computers on the Internet allow easy access to electronic services and information. Hosts can be sponsored by a wide range of entities including,